

**Planning Commission
MINUTES – Regular Meeting**

**March 27, 2019
City of Hagerstown, Maryland**

Douglas S. Wright, Jr., chair, opened the meeting at 6:56 p.m., on Wednesday, March 27, 2019, in the Conference Room, Fourth Floor, City Hall. Also present were commission members C. Davis, C. Ploscaru, J. Stone, and R. Thomas. The following staff members were present: K. Maher, Director of Planning and Code Administration Department; S. Bockmiller, Development Planner/Zoning Administrator; M. Flick, Planner; and D. Calhoun, Secretary.

REGULAR MEETING

Roll Call.

Commission members S. McIntire and J. Wheeler were absent.

Approval of Minutes:

March 13, 2019.

MOTION: (Stone/Thomas) I will move for approval.

DISCUSSION: None.

ACTION: APPROVED (ABSTAIN – Davis, Ploscaru)

Development Review:

**Ferguson – 955 Sweeney Drive – Warehouse/Office Addition, Site Plan,
Case No. ZS-2019-01.**

Staff Report: (Staff report is in meeting file) This site plan is for the creation of a 15,000-square-foot addition on the front of an existing warehouse structure located at the rear of the site. In a recent workshop, the commission expressed receptiveness to waiver requests for landscaping along both side property lines due to existing topography and existing improvements and a waiver from the need for a dumpster enclosure, since the dumpster is located along the back of the main building near the center of the site. In addition, two parking bays in the rear will not be capped with landscaped islands as these areas will be striped only to meet ordinance requirements and the actual number of employees on site suggests these spaces will never be used for parking. This area is needed for turning radii for tractor trailers. In the City’s ongoing effort to ensure redevelopment and expansion sites meet all current requirements to the greatest

extent possible, landscaping shrubs will be installed along the front parking bay in front of the building.

The site plan was routed to all review agencies and all have provided approvals. Three agencies had minor outstanding comments. Staff recommended approval of both the site plan and the waiver requests.

Applicant/Commission Discussion: Adam Hager of Frederick, Seibert & Associates, engineers for the project, and the owner, LeRoy Myers, were present. Mr. Bockmiller reviewed the requested waivers. On one side of the building there is a paved area that will remain and a swale on the other side which will not permit landscaping in that area.

MOTION: (Thomas/Ploscaru) I'll make a motion that we approve the requested landscaping waivers.

DISCUSSION: None.

ACTION: APPROVED (Unanimous)

MOTION: (Thomas/Davis) So moved (to approve the site plan).

DISCUSSION: Staff noted the three conditional approvals from Wastewater and Light Divisions and the Fire Marshal. The motioner and seconder agreed to the amendment to the motion.

ACTION: APPROVED AS AMENDED (Unanimous)

McCleary Hill – Phase I, Final Plat, Case No. S-2019-01.

McCleary Hill – Phase II, Final Plat, Case No. S-2019-02.

Staff Report: (Staff report is in meeting file.) These final plats were considered together. Phase I is for the creation of six single-family, detached dwelling lots, two bulk development lots, and a lot for the proposed community building, as well as the dedication of right-of-way for the proposed subdivision streets and right-of-way along Maryland Route 144 and Hopewell Road. Phase II is for the creation of eight single-family, detached dwelling lots, three bulk development lots, and a lot for open space south of the proposed community building and the playground.

The Washington County Board of Education provided comment and analysis on the impact of this development; however, the City of Hagerstown does not have an Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance so this data was provided for the commission's information only. Staff also noted that due to the cross-referencing of call outs, and the fact that lot numbering is not sequential between these plats, staff recommended a condition that the two plats be recorded concurrently and appear adjacent in the Land Records in order to avoid future confusion.

These final plats were routed to all review agencies and all have provided approvals. Staff recommended approval of both final plats, subject to the conditions cited in the staff memo. Conditional approvals were received from Water and Wastewater Divisions.

Staff noted that lots fronting on Route 144 will not have direct access to that street. There will be an alley system to the rear of the lots. In order to satisfy the Fire Marshal, Gneiss Drive will be renamed to Insurance Way once the connection is made. Planning Commission members requested that a note be placed on the plat for clarity in the future. Mr. Wright noted that one of the alley names in Phase II is misspelled (“Magnatite” should be “Magnetite”).

Applicant/Commission Discussion: Michael Hicks of EcoLand Solutions, engineers for the project, was present. There were no additional comments or questions by the commission. Staff noted that conditional approvals were received from Wastewater on Phase I; and Wastewater and Water on Phase II. The State Highway Administration recently approved the road improvements on Route 144. Staff anticipated signing off on the site plan in the near future.

MOTION: (Stone/Thomas) I’ll make a motion that we approve both of these plats with the following conditions: 1) they be recorded sequentially; 2) there are conditional approvals by Water and Wastewater; 3) that a notation be added to the plat that Gneiss Drive will be renamed at such time as it connects out to Insurance Way; 4) and correct the spelling of Magnetite.

DISCUSSION: None.

ACTION: APPROVED (Unanimous)

Workshop: People’s Gospel Tabernacle – Waivers from Parking Lot Landscaping Requirements.

Staff Report: (Staff report is in meeting file.) People’s Gospel Tabernacle is located on the corner of Fridinger Avenue and Security Road. The church owns the adjacent residential lot which used to contain a small dwelling which was recently demolished. The church would like to expand their parking onto this property. To expand the church use onto an adjacent property will require a special exception from the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA).

Before they go through the appeal process staff encouraged the church to present their plans to the commission in a workshop format since they will need waivers to construct the parking lot. A ten-foot landscaping buffer is required along Fridinger Avenue, the adjacent property line, the alley, and Security Road. The church is proposing to use gravel as the paving surface. The church provided two options for the commission to consider: Option A showed little or no

buffer/setback. Option B showed eight feet of landscaping along Fridinger Avenue and the south property line in the new parking area.

Staff noted that the adjacent residence is a relatively new structure which was built as part of the redevelopment of the former Charlton Trucking Company property. Additional new homes are under construction across Fridinger Avenue. Staff was mostly concerned about the use of gravel for parking so close to nearby dwellings, especially without the typically required buffer strips. The use of gravel has the potential to impact nearby dwellings if not appropriately maintained. Text amendments are pending (effective in June) that would require paving the parking area with concrete, asphalt, or similar material. Currently the ordinance requires a “stable, dust-free surface.” In June amendments will go into effect where a parking lot would have to be a permanent paved surface.

Pastor Clarence Hurd was present. The church was established in this location in 1941. Recently they acquired the adjacent property with the plan to demolish the house and expand their parking lot using gravel until such time as they are able to pave the lot. The buffer zones required by the ordinance would reduce the number of cars they could park on the lot. In addition, the lot has always been gravel. The church’s preference is to provide a paved parking lot from the alley to the sidewalk along Fridinger Avenue rather than adding landscaping. There is a privacy fence that separates the property that contained the recently demolished house and the next new house on Fridinger Avenue. The site has not been final graded. The neighbor who owns the new house immediately adjacent to the lot has no issues with the proposed parking lot.

Mr. Bockmiller stated that the ordinance would require ten-foot landscaping buffers on all four sides. Commission members had no concerns about waiving the landscaping requirements but wanted the parking lot paved immediately. Pastor Hurd stated that the gravel surface is very tight since the recent rains. Commission members held firm and stated that the lot should be paved now. They believed the gravel will have a higher impact on the property owners than the landscaping.

Mr. Bockmiller stated that if the BZA approves the special exception, the church will need to submit a minor site plan. Site grading will be examined at that point. The church is contemplating an addition to their building, but the drawings have not been completed; Pastor Hurd could not speculate when those plans will be complete.

It was the consensus of the commission that there was no objection to eliminating the landscaping if they do the asphalt paving right away.

Planning Commission Business:

Report on Staff Field Trip to Manheim, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.

Ms. Maher informed the commission that staff is beginning to work on changes to the City's PUD (Planned Unit Development) requirements. Recently Planning staff traveled to Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, and met with a township planner who took staff through some of the township's PRD developments (their version of a PUD). Examples were Richmond Square, Florin Hill, and Worthington in Manheim Township, among others.

Staff is considering smaller open space requirements and considering hardscape open space, however, they are still in data-collection mode. Staff speculated that the City may need to create several different types of PUDs since not all models will fit every situation. Mr. Wright cautioned that a product will need to be developed that will sell in the Washington County area.

Staff hopes to begin discussion of PUD options in late May with the commission. The Comprehensive Rezoning will begin after the recent amendments to the Land Management Code become effective.

Announcements.

None.

Adjourn. It was moved and seconded that the meeting adjourn (8:00 p.m.)

4/24/2019

Approved



Debra C. Calhoun - Secretary